

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appl. No. : 10/821,799

Applicant : FRENCH et al.

**Confirmation No. 9329**

Filed: : April 9, 2004

TC/A.U. : 3644

Examiner: : Dinh, T.

Docket No. : 2060-97

Customer No. : 22442

Title: : "BALLOONSONDE LAUNCHER"

Mail Stop Issue Fee  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

**COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

Dear Sir:

Applicant submits this Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance to address further the Notice of Allowability ("Notice") having a mailing date of April 5, 2007.

In the Notice, the Examiner's stated reasons for allowance were that "The closest prior art, Eyre et al 3195835 fail to show a method of inflating the cover prior to the inflation of the inner balloon to be launched. Further, Eyre et al fails to show extending or elevating the balloon and inflating it after inflating the cover." Based on the Notice, the patentability of all other independent and dependent claims is assumed to be based upon the elements as set forth in such claims and that such claims meet all criteria for patentability under §101, §102, §103 and §112.

As is clear from MPEP 1302.14,

"The statement [of reasons for allowance] is not intended to necessarily state all the reasons for allowance or all the details why claims are allowed and should not be written to specifically or impliedly state that all the reasons for allowance are set forth."

While the above-stated may be a stated reason for allowing some independent claims, Applicant submits that some independent claims have a different reason for allowance and that some independent claims have other reasons for allowance.

Specifically, the prior art fails to teach the following features of independent Claims 1, 7, 18, 50, 57 and 64:

1. An automated method of launching a balloon comprising:
  - providing a collapsible protective cover comprising a flexible material forming an inner region;
  - providing a balloon;
  - inflating the balloon under the direction of a controller, wherein at least a portion of said balloon is inflated within at least a portion of said inner region of said protective cover, and the operation of at least partially inflating said protective cover is initiated prior to said step of inflating said balloon;
  - opening at least a portion of said protective cover forming an opening in said protective cover; and
  - releasing said balloon through said opening of said protective cover.

7. An automated method of launching a balloon comprising:
  - providing a collapsible protective cover comprising a flexible material forming an inner region;
  - providing a balloon;
  - inflating the balloon under the direction of a controller, wherein at least a portion of said balloon is inflated within at least a portion of said inner region of said protective cover, wherein the operation of at least partially inflating said protective cover is initiated prior to said step of inflating said balloon, and said operation of inflating said balloon is initiated after said balloon is extended from a first configuration to a second configuration;
  - opening at least a portion of said protective cover forming an opening in said protective cover; and
  - releasing said balloon through said opening of said protective cover.

18. An automated method of launching a balloon comprising:
  - providing a collapsible protective cover comprising a flexible material forming an inner region and an inflatable support structure attached to said flexible material of said protective cover;

providing a balloon;

inflating the balloon under the direction of a controller, wherein at least a portion of said balloon is inflated within at least a portion of said inner region of said protective cover, and the operation of at least partially inflating said protective cover is initiated prior to said step of inflating said balloon;

opening at least a portion of said protective cover forming an opening in said protective cover; and

releasing said balloon through said opening of said protective cover.

50. An automated method of launching a balloon comprising:

providing a collapsible protective cover comprising a flexible material forming an inner region;

providing an uninflated balloon;

at least partially inflating the protective cover to extend the uninflated balloon from a first configuration to a second configuration; and

at least partially inflating the balloon, wherein at least a portion of said balloon is inflated within at least a portion of said inner region of said protective cover.

57. An automated balloon launching method comprising:

providing a collapsible protective cover;

providing an uninflated balloon;

at least partially inflating the protective cover to elevate the uninflated balloon to a filling position; and

at least partially inflating the balloon, wherein at least a portion of said balloon is inflated within at least a portion of the protective cover.

64. A method comprising:

at least partially inflating a protective cover;

at least partially inflating a balloon, wherein at least a portion of said balloon is inflated within at least a portion of the protective cover, the operation of at least partially inflating said protective cover occurring prior to said step of inflating said balloon;

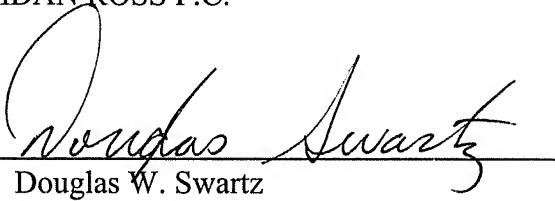
opening at least a portion of said protective cover; and

releasing said balloon.

Although the Applicant believes that no fees are due for filing this Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance, please charge any fees deemed necessary to Deposit Account No. 19-1970.

Respectfully submitted,

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